WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY
Knowledge Management Playbook
Guidelines: Creating Knowledge Articles

Draft

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Document B01 – Guidelines: Creating Knowledge Articles

Contents

Guidelines

HOW TO CREATE A KNOWLEDGE ARTICLE

This document is designed to provide, guidelines and examples to assist you in developing your knowledge articles. Associated with this document is a template to be used in developing your knowledge articles. Refer to Document B02 Knowledge Article Template and Appendix

These guidelines cover
1. Structuring knowledge articles
2. Use of language and tone, and building and maintaining consistency
3. Writing an article using a standard template

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STRUCTURING KNOWLEDGE ARTICLES

In most cases, a knowledge article will cover a single question/topic.

However, it may in some cases be preferable to combine several short Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) into a single knowledge article in order to provide a complete answer. This avoids creating multiple articles with single sentence answers, and reduces the need for users to click to access different articles to find their answer.

LANGUAGE, TONE AND CONSISTENCY

Language, tone and consistency in use of terms, words, phrases and naming conventions for systems are the key to well-constructed articles. It is critically important that you, your team and your business unit use the same language, tone, terms and naming conventions.

8Gr8 Tips:
1. When writing articles refer to staff or students in the second person (e.g. "you", "you are") and to Western Sydney University and yourself in the first person where possible (e.g. "we are").

2. Use plain English.
    a. Keep your language and sentences simple and to the point.
    b. ***Avoid jargon!***
    c. Avoid overusing acronyms. If you need to use an acronym, spell out the full name in the first instance.

3. Be conversational and friendly. Avoid unnecessary formality and write the article in the way you might explain it in spoken language.

4. Use <u>positive</u> rather than negative language.
   For example:
    "*Ensure you submit supporting documents with your application*"
    instead of
   "*Applications will not be processed without supporting documents*"

5. Use <u>active</u> rather than passive language. For Example:
   "*Submit your application by 5 July*"
   instead of
   "*Applications must be submitted by 5 July*"

6. Remember to use the first person for headings (I, my) and the second person for answers (you, your)

7. Ensure where specific terms are used to describe a system for example '*Staff Online*' it is captured in the Glossary document

8. The tone of voice needs to align with Western Sydney University's brand. Consistent with the University's Verbal Assets document, aim for the tone of voice to be:

   - Confident and determined – a leadership position
   - Extroverted and outgoing
   - Distinctly Australian, but with a global outlook
   - Smart and conversational
   - Bold and succinct – we say more with less words

   For further information on tone, refer to the University's Verbal Assets document, available on the Brand website www.westernsydney.edu.au/brand.

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WRITING AN ARTICLE USING THE KNOWLEDGE ARTICLE TEMPLATE
Use Document B02 Knowledge Article Template to develop your articles
Refer to Knowledge Article examples set out in the Appendix for reference

1. QUESTIONS

Most article headings will be questions written in the first person (e.g. "*Can I…*", "*How do I…*"). Some topic-based questions (informational knowledge articles) will not require reference to the first person (e.g. "*What is Annual Leave?*").

Keep the audience in mind and frame questions and answers in words that staff and students are likely to use.

Questions should include

   i.   The most important <u>keywords</u> in order for search results to be relevant to a staff member or student

   ii.   Ensure you provide sufficient context for terms that can have different meanings. For example, use "*How do I apply for annual leave?*" instead of "*How do I apply for leave?*" given the latter could also refer to sick leave, leave without pay, parental leave, personal leave.

2. SHORT ANSWERS

1. Provide a short answer in one sentence, followed by further short explanation, if required.
2. Avoid single sentence answers that refer staff or students to another knowledge article or to the University website. Staff or students searching a knowledge base will expect meaningful information that successfully answers their query
3. Staff or students will only see a single question and answer on screen. Answers need to be self-contained (with contact points and links to related information if relevant)

3.   FURTHER INFORMATION

1. Use numbered steps for sequential actions (only use a step for each action staff or students need to take, not outcomes of those actions)
2. Use bullet points for information that is not sequential (e.g. a list of criteria or options)
3. When writing procedures where a system is to be used, use "*click*" for buttons and "*select*" when referring to menu options
4. Avoid including detailed explanations of context or terms. Keep it brief and consider linking to a separate article if necessary. Staff and students want to access the information as quickly as possible without scrolling. Keep all articles concise. Focus only on what needs to be known in response to the question, and avoid unnecessary detail
5. If the content is lengthy, consider whether it is necessary and/or whether it needs to be split up into two or more knowledge articles.
6. Videos and images, including screen shots, should be used where they add value and reduce content length

4.   CONTACTS

1. At the end of the body of the article, provide a contact point for students seeking assistance or more information, starting with "*If you have any questions or need assistance…*". Use generic/group email addresses (e.g. *chaplaincy@westernsydney.edu.au*) and office phone numbers rather than mobile numbers. Avoid using staff email addresses, and personal names, given that staff and roles can change.

5.   NEXT QUESTION RESOLUTION

1. Anticipate the next question and answer that too. For example: If your article relates to '*Where can I park my car on campus?*' the staff member or student may also want to know if there is a charge for using this service, so include that information too. If the next question requires a lot of information, consider separating out into a separate article and including in the '*Related Articles*' section.

6.   RELATED LINKS AND RELATED ARTICLES

1. Where additional information is available, or access can be provided to a system that can support the staff or student add the links by typing the name of the page and add the address as a hyperlink over the words.
2. Where there other knowledge articles that are closely aligned to the topic you are discussing you should describe them here providing the article heading.

7. FINALISING YOUR ARTICLE

1. The article content needs to be accurate and precise. Make sure the information provided is consistent across knowledge articles. For articles that include system procedures and access to systems, test all procedural steps.

2. It is important to have a colleague in your business unit review your draft article to check accuracy, clarity, length, language and tone.

Refer to Document A01 Managing Your Knowledge for guidance on Reviewing, and Approving your Knowledge articles.

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Appendix - Knowledge Article Examples
PROCEDURAL KNOWLEDGE ARTICLE EXAMPLE:

Knowledge Developer:	**Wilbur Smith**
Reviewed by:	**Charles Dickens**
Approved by:	**Mark Twain**
Date Approved:	**12th of Never**
Applicable to:	**Students**
Question: *What is the FAQ?*	How do I apply to have my result grade reviewed for a unit I have studied?
Short Answer: *Answer the question in one sentence.*	You can apply online to have your grade for a unit reviewed. Just make sure you submit your application within 10 working days of your results being made available in My Student Records (MySR).

Further Information:
 	
Expand on the information you provided in the short answer here if there are further details or more context a staff member or student needs to know in order to take the next step with their query.
	• Before applying, check the <u>accepted reasons for applying for a review of grade</u> and find out what <u>supporting documents</u> you may need.
	
	• To submit your application:
	  1. Scan any hardcopy supporting documents so you have a softcopy ready to upload as part of your application.
	  2. **Log in** to <u>Western Central</u>.
	  3. Select Links then eForms.
	  4. **Click Find Forms** then select Review of Grade.
	  5. Complete the form including attaching any supporting documents.
	  6. **Click Submit**.
	
	• You'll receive an email acknowledging that your application has been successfully submitted.
	• Your Unit Coordinator and Director of Academic Program will review your application
	• You will receive an email advising you of the outcome within four weeks

Next Question Resolution: *Anticipate the next question and answer that too.* *For example: If your article relates to 'Where can I park my bike on campus?' the user may also want to know if there is a charge for using this service, so include that information too. (If the next question requires a lot of information, consider separating out into a separate article and including in the 'Related Articles' section.)*	What if I have not received notification in four weeks? If you do not receive notification within four weeks, please email <u>reviewofgrade@westernsydney.edu.au</u>
Contacts: *Provide contact point for staff or students seeking assistance or more information* *Do not use a personal email address or phone number.*	If you have any questions or need assistance, contact Student Central on 1300 668 370 or email <u>reviewofgrade@westernsydney.edu.au</u>
Related Links: *Add the links by typing the name of the page and add the address as a hyperlink over the words.*	What information or supporting documents do I need to apply for a review of grade? What reasons are acceptable for applying for a review of grade? <u>Review of grade</u>
Related Articles: *Are there other knowledge articles that are closely aligned to the topic you are discussing?*	
Knowledge Contributor/ Author:	**Natalie Egan**

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Reviewed by:	**Karen Berta**
Approved by:	**Karen Berta**
Date Approved:	**25th December**
Applicable to:	**All Staff**
Question: What is the FAQ?	How do I apply for Parental Leave?
Short Answer: Answer the question in one sentence.	Submit a Parental Leave Request form on WesternNow. Once submitted, this will go to your direct Manager for approving.
Further Information: *Expand on the information you provided there are further details or more context a staff member needs to know in order to take the next step with their query.*	Before applying for Parental Leave, you may like to read the knowledge article *'What do I need to consider before applying for Parental Leave?'* To submit your application: 1. Scan any hardcopy supporting documents so you have a softcopy ready to upload as part of your application. 2. **Log in** to WesternNow. 3. Select Links then eForms. 4. **Click Find Forms** then select Review of Grade. 5. Complete the form including attaching any supporting documents. 6. **Click Submit**. You will receive an email acknowledging that your application has been successfully submitted. Your direct manager will review your application. You will receive an email advising you of the outcome of your request.
Next Question Resolution: *Anticipate the next question and answer that too.* *For example: If your article relates to 'Where can I park my bike on campus?' the user may also want to know if there is a charge for using this service, so include that information too. (If the next question requires a lot of information, consider separating out into a separate article and including in the 'Related Articles' section.)*	What if I have not received an outcome of my request or it has been declined? Have a discussion with your direct manager. They may want to determine your backfill plans or may need a detail revised before submitting their approval.
Contacts: *Provide contact point for staff or students seeking assistance or more information*	HR Operations – humanresources@westernsydney.edu.au or (02) 9678 7575
Related Links: *Add the links by typing the name of the page and add the address as a hyperlink over the words.*	
Related Articles: *Are there other knowledge articles that are closely aligned to the topic you are discussing?*	What do I need to consider before applying for Parental (Maternity) Leave? What do I need to consider before applying for Parental (Adoption) Leave? What do I need to consider before applying for Parental (Foster Parent) Leave? What do I need to consider before applying for Parental (Partner) Leave?

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INFORMATIONAL KNOWLEDGE ARTICLE EXAMPLE

Knowledge Developer:	**Wilbur Smith**
Reviewed by:	**Charles Dickens**
Approved by:	**Mark Twain**
Date Approved:	**12th Night**
Applicable to:	**Students**
Question: *What is the FAQ?*	What items can I take into the exam room?
Short Answer: *Answer the question in one sentence.*	You will need to bring your valid Western Sydney University student ID card to enter the exam room. Please display your card on your desk during the exam.
Further Information: *Expand on the information you provided in the short answer here if there are further details or more context a staff member or student needs to know in order to take the next step with their query.*	You can take the following items into the examination room: • Writing materials (pens, pencils, rulers and erasers), which can be contained in a clear plastic bag or clear pencil case. • Purse or wallet. Place this in your bag or on your desk where it is visible to the exam supervisor at all times. • Mobile phone or other communication device – ensure this is **switched off** (including all alarms and message alerts) and place it face up on your desk where it is visible to the exam supervisor at all times. • Water in a clear container. You may not bring food unless it is specified in your Academic Integration Plan (AIP). Please remember that if you bring anything that is not listed on the exam paper, it will be removed from you until you finish your exam.
Next Question Resolution: *Anticipate the next question and answer that too.* *For example: If your article relates to 'Where can I park my bike on campus?' the user may also want to know if there is a charge for using this service, so include that information too. (If the next question requires a lot of information, consider separating out into a separate article and including in the 'Related Articles' section.)*	I have special requirements what should I do? If you have any special requirements for items not listed above, please email the Assessment and Graduation team at exams_progression@westernsydney.edu.au to request written permission before the exam period. Resources allowed in the exam as specified on your exam paper. Contact your Unit Coordinator for details prior to the exam.
Contacts: *Provide contact point for staff or students seeking assistance or more information* *Do not use a personal email address or phone number.*	If you need assistance, please call 02 4736 0600 or email exams_progression@westernsydney.edu.au
Related Links: *Add the links by typing the name of the page and add the address as a hyperlink over the words.*	You can find out more information at the webpage Exams and results
Related Articles: *Are there other knowledge articles that are closely aligned to the topic you are discussing?*	What items can't I take into the exam room? Are there lockers I can use on campus? Can I do my exam if I don't have my student ID card with me? Can I do my exam if my student ID card has expired?

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Knowledge Developer:	**Natalie Egan**
Reviewed by:	**Karen Berta**
Approved by:	**Karen Berta**
Date Approved:	**25th December**
Applicable to:	**All Staff**
Question: *What is the FAQ?*	What do I need to consider before applying for Parental (Maternity) Leave?
Short Answer: *Answer the question in one sentence.*	Before applying for Parental Leave, you will need to understand your eligibility to take leave at the University, request for the appropriate evidence to apply for it, check government benefits available to you and discuss your finances with your partner.

Further Information:
 	
Expand on the information you provided in the short answer here if there are further details or more context a staff member or student needs to know in order to take the next step with their query.
	Before applying for Parental (Maternity) Leave:
	
	• Understand your *entitlement* - The Staff Agreements outlines who is able to take Parental Leave and the types of Parental Leave available.
	• Ask your doctor for a *medical certificate* confirming your expected date of birth;
	• Check if you can get *government support*: The Department of Human Services have a few Parental Pay Benefits that you may be eligible for. This is arranged with the Department directly.
	• Discuss with your partner;
	    ▪ If you would like to take parental leave at full or half pay (if eligible) and if you would like to use other leave available to extend the leave period; and
	    ▪ how you might manage your *finances* and if you will manage if you need to take Leave Without Pay

Next Question Resolution: *Anticipate the next question and answer that too.* *For example: If your article relates to 'Where can I park my bike on campus?' the user may also want to know if there is a charge for using this service, so include that information too. (If the next question requires a lot of information, consider separating out into a separate article and including in the 'Related Articles' section.)*	**When** to apply for Parental Leave: When you are comfortable to do so, have a discussion with your Manager about your situation. This will allow your manager to plan and prepare for your departure and potential backfill. The Parental Leave request form must be completed at least 4 weeks before the expected date of birth and no later than the date of birth.
Contacts: *Provide contact point for staff or students seeking assistance or more information* *Do not use a personal email address or phone number.*	HR Operations – humanresources@westernsydney.edu.au or (02) 9678 7575
Related Links: *Add the links by typing the name of the page and add the address as a hyperlink over the words.*	Staff Agreements – Staff Agreements Department of Human Services – xxx
Related Articles: *Are there other knowledge articles that are closely aligned to the topic you are discussing?*	How do I apply for Parental Leave? Returning to Work following Parental Leave Flexible Work Arrangements What do I need to consider before applying for Parental (Adoption) Leave? What do I need to consider before applying for Parental (Foster Parent) Leave? What do I need to consider before applying for Parental (Partner) Leave?